

ERIC Document Resume		See Instruction Sheet		DATE OF RESUME		DATE RECEIVED	
A. PUBLICATION DATA							
1. ERIC NUMBER ED001751		2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S). N.A.		3. IDENTIFICATION NO. N.A.		DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW	
4. AUTHOR(S): Janowitz, Gayle						MICROFILM COPY AVAILABLE YES ☒ NO ☐	
5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED: After-School Study Centers: Volunteer Work in Reading						COPYRIGHT GRANTED YES ☒ NO ☐	
6. PUBLICATION TITLE: N.A.						COPYRIGHT RELEASE FILED YES ☒ NO ☐	
7. EDITOR(S): N.A.				8. PLACE OF ORIGIN ORG. Hyde Park Neighborhood Club ST. 5480 Kenwood Ave. CITY, STATE Chicago, Ill.		TYPE OF REPORT PROPOSAL ☐ IN-PROGRESS ☐ FINAL ☒ FOLLOW-UP ☐	
9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE Hyde Park Neighborhood Club, 5480 Kenwood Ave., Chicago, Illinois							
10. VOL. N.A.	11. PAGES N.A.	12. MO./YR. 1964	13. TOTAL PP. 39	TELE. INST/LOC CODE	EXT.	OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:	
						ERIC SATELLITE CODE	
B. INDEXING DATA							
14. SUBJECT AREA				15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR report			
16. INDEXING TERMS (8-12)							
elementary education		study centers		reading games			
community participation		curriculum		tutoring			
underachievers		reading problems					
17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)							
A study center in Hyde Park, Chicago, was opened in September, 1962. It consisted of a deposit collection from the public library, a study room equipped with reference material, and space for individual tutoring. The purpose of the study center was to help children feel that success is possible so that they could begin to feel more self-confident in academic areas. The center could help 60 children at one time, most of whom were referred by seven neighborhood schools. It was open weekdays after school and on Saturdays. Such a center could become inundated with those who "have no place to go," when it should be directed toward underachievers. It should help those who have handicaps, such as reading problems, but should not attempt to remediate severe problems. Tutoring is, basically, good reading instruction. The standard readers teach the mechanics of how to read; supplementary and controlled vocabulary books at every level could give helpful reinforcement. The tutor and child should know each other as individuals, recognizing willingness to achieve and willingness to help. Tutors should work with small informal groups to be able to detect problems and to maintain a good relationship with each child.							
ERIC No.	18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT						
	C. FUNDING DATA						
	19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION			20. DIVISION OR DEPT.		21. CONTRACT NO.	
				22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT		PROJECT NO.	
			23. DURATION OR PROJECT		U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education		

ED001751

AFTER-SCHOOL STUDY CENTERS

Volunteer Work in Reading

By

GAYLE JANOWITZ

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VOLUNTEER WORK IN READING**

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(Additional copies of this pamphlet may be obtained from the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club, 5480 Kenwood Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60615, or from Big Cities School Project, Center for Social Organization Studies, Box 33, 1126 East 59th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637; Price, 25 cents.)

INTRODUCTION

While responsible research shows that the schools of today are doing a better job than ever in terms of how well children read, and how long they stay in school, the demands of urbanization and automation have put the schools to a very severe test. The term "drop-out" has appeared in recent years to describe those children who leave school, usually ill-prepared for employment, before graduation. Even a generation ago, many children quit school and no one worried about them as we do today, or considered them to be failures or a threat to society. Today, there is literally no place for these young people to go, except to join the ranks of the unemployed. The jobs which such youngsters formerly filled are rapidly disappearing.

Since more young people are staying in school longer than ever before, the national drop-out rate goes down each year as pressure builds up to help children stay in school. The result is that the range of achievement in upper grades and especially in high school, is greater than ever before. Children who would have dropped out are now being kept in school. In many communities, especially in urban centers, a crisis exists because of the large concentration of children who do not achieve adequately in school.

Many segments of society have come to realize that the job to be done is too great for the schools alone to handle. In some communities, volunteer efforts to supplement and enrich the academic program are being developed. The after-school Study Center is one type of organization which supplements the work of the school, and works closely with the school system. Close cooperation between such services and the schools is important, since children need a coherent view of the world of adults. An after-school Study Center serves three functions: (1) library facilities for all children, (2) reference materials and adults to help with homework assignments, and (3) remedial help in reading and arithmetic for children who are academically below their level of ability.

Just as it is the responsibility of parents of grade-school children to see that their children do their homework, and to support their schools while working for better education, so it is the responsibility of adults working in a Study Center to support the schools and teachers. Their job is to help children succeed in school.

While there are students who underachieve academically in every school in America, it is also true that urban centers have greater problems because of the rapid increase in the school population, and because of the sheer number of children they are trying to educate. In the short run, the rapid expansion of study centers for children can help to supplement the efforts of the schools to improve the achievement of children.

In the long run, the concept of centers to supplement the work of the schools will continue to be useful, even if the remedial part of the program is not so much needed. There are many enrichment activities which could be carried on in such

centers—such as reading clubs which encourage thoughtful discussion of books, or science clubs.

Study Centers are presently located both within and outside of school buildings. They are places where children can spend after-school hours doing homework, and receive help with reading and arithmetic. Sometimes, they include a branch public library. Other times, it is necessary to collect donated books to make books available to the children.

A school with an after-hours community program is an ideal setting for a Study Center, since the school library is already a community investment. Some "lighted school" programs have opened the gymnasium first, but library facilities are equally needed by children. Distance is a problem for young children, and availability of study centers is important. The more available they are, the more young children will be able to use them.

A few large cities have experimented with volunteer programs during and after school hours, which include reading help. If no such program exists, experience shows that children will and do come to an after-school center. Even if much of this activity is gradually taken over by schools, there will always be need for a site for children to have easy access to reference books and reading materials and a place for doing homework. There will also be children for whom it is important to walk a few blocks and enter a new setting, away from the school where they have failed.

A community interested in supplementing the work of local schools should first consult the schools about their specific problems and programs. They should then explore library facilities and community agencies to see how well they are meeting the needs of children for academic help. However, the Study Center concept is a community volunteer program that must initially stand on its own feet and on the initiative of the local citizens.

This paper is based on my experiences at the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club Study Center. I wish to acknowledge the support of Mr. John H. Ramey, Executive Director of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club, Mrs. Richard Mundy, the Study Center Coordinator, and Mrs. Homer Harlan, Chairman of the Study Center Committee. In addition, many of the tutors have helped make it possible for me to write this report by sharing their experiences and records.

What is the basic idea of tutoring work? Tutoring is designed to assist classroom teachers. The approach of tutoring is based on a one-to-one relationship between the tutor and the pupil. Pupils who have fallen behind in their academic subjects can be helped by additional assistance once or twice a week for periods of thirty minutes or more. It is assumed that at least one semester and preferably a year is required before results can be obtained.

Tutoring is not a substitute for the work of the classroom teacher; it is an approach to aid the teacher's work. Tutors need to be supervised, but have a specific job which can be performed by adult volunteers and by carefully selected young people.

ORGANIZATION OF A STUDY CENTER

Hyde Park, an integrated community in the vicinity of the University of Chicago, has a grass-roots organization studying and working on community problems. This organization, the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference, first became aware of the need for children in the area to have additional library facilities and help with academic skills. They approached the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club, a member of the National Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers, which became interested in providing such a service. Since there was no room in the Neighborhood Club, space was found in the same block in a former liquor store which had been taken over by the urban renewal program, and which is scheduled for demolition at a later date. The Neighborhood Club plans to build an addition to house the Study Center, when the present temporary quarters have to come down.

This Study Center, opened in September, 1962, consists of a deposit collection from the public library, a study room equipped with a selection of reference materials suitable for grade-school children to use in completing homework assignments, and space for individual tutoring. It is open weekday afternoons after school from 3:00 to 5:15, and on Saturday mornings from 10:30 to 1:00, to the grade-school children of seven neighboring schools. These include public, parochial and private schools. An article in the Chicago Schools Journal (February, 1963) describes the organization and work of this Study Center.

In November, 1962, the individual tutoring program was added to the library and homework facilities of the Center. The experiences of this group, with which I have been involved from the beginning, provide some of the material for this paper. The orientation is, however, my own. This paper is used as orientation for new tutors in our program, many of whom do not have teaching experience.

Approximately seventy children receive help with reading and/or arithmetic. Several have graduated from the tutoring program, and no longer need our help. A number of children have moved. Some of the children who moved came back to us, saying that they could not find a Study Center in their new community, and asked to continue their tutoring. Although we have tried to limit our program to the local community, we have continued with these children. Our experience has been that distance, usually combined with a lack of a telephone, makes it very difficult to work with children who live far from the Study Center.

Most applicants for tutoring are referred by the schools. If children ask for help, we check with the schools to find out whether they feel it would be helpful. If the family has a phone, arrangements can be made over the phone. In many cases, there is no telephone and a letter is sent. If the tutors have time, someone calls on the family to explain our program and the referral from the school. Re-

ferral alone does not bring the children to the Study Center, since they also come on their own. Often, they need the encouragement of a home visit and an explanation of our program. The concept is still new enough to need explanation to the parents, and we also need their help. The most frequent recommendation to parents is that, if possible, someone listen to the child read for ten or fifteen minutes every evening. Some parents have been reluctant to send their children until assured that there is no charge. (There is a registration fee of 25¢ a semester, which can be waived. Those who can afford help are referred elsewhere.)

Interest in beginning a study center comes from various sources. Often a parents' group takes the initiative, sometimes it is a group of teachers, and other times, it is a community organization which decides to develop this service.

An established setting such as a settlement house, YMCA or Boys' Club is a good location. Settlement houses have a tradition of helping with mass literacy. Such community agencies as these have already had contact with many of the children needing the services of a study center. They have professional staff available to help, and they have other facilities which can supplement efforts to help the children academically.

A responsible group wishing to develop a study center will look to all available community resources for help. They will also determine the need for such a service, by examining the availability of libraries and remedial help for children. In the absence of accessible schools or other community agencies, some groups will look to their churches as possible sites for after-school centers. Such a service may have to begin with one room, and a few adults, possibly on a limited basis of a couple of afternoons a week. However, since this service involves children, and the agencies who have developed such facilities have found that the children respond in great numbers, a sponsoring group should begin such a project only if they have intentions of continuing it. The children will come, and there needs to be enough volunteer staff to help them.

If rooms are used for multi-purposes, so that materials have to be continually stored away, it will be hard to give the feeling of permanency. Ideally, the children ought to be able to put up their own drawings, and assist in any way that they can in running a study center. Often, it is more time-consuming to let the children help, but it increases their participation. They can learn library routine, they can and do help each other with homework, and read stories to younger children. Efforts of adults to let the children help can mean a great deal to the children.

The minimum requirements for a "reading room" for children are some reference books, and books for reading which should be available to use at home. The staff, whether it is paid or volunteer, has to accept a professional responsibility, since they are working with children. The children may not always come when they are supposed to, but the adults must understand that this is not volunteer work in the sense of coming when they feel like it, or on a haphazard basis. They must also be oriented and supervised, so that the difficulties of helping children do not

seem so unrewarding that they get discouraged and quit.

The orientation, training, and supervision of volunteers is one of the major concerns of any tutoring or study center project. The sponsoring agency of such a service for children has to assume responsibility, not only for the children, but also for the adults or older children who give the service.

At the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club, experienced teachers help the inexperienced volunteers. The records kept about the children serve as helpful orientation. Monthly meetings for tutors give them a chance to discuss their children, receive help, and gain recognition for their work.

A variety of materials is important in a study center. In some neighborhoods, it is possible to get reference books and library books donated. Other times, these have to be bought. Paperback books are among the least expensive good books for children. The children like readers and school materials, because they are familiar. They like storybooks which have often not been readily available to them. Hardest to provide are some of the new good books which picture Negro children. Some of these have been available for such a short time that they are usually not received as donations.

Since the object is to put books into the hands of children who need them, a sponsoring group has to make a decision about the system of marking and circulating books. Established library procedures are very time-consuming. Unless a group has a great deal of professional help, it is best to make the system as simple as possible. Some study centers paste book jackets into the books, and insert a card telling the name of the book and the author. The children then sign their names, the person in charge marks a date due, and the card is left at the center as a record. There will always be some loss of books, but the experience of our study center in having books returned has been very good.

Often librarians have strong ideas about the types of books that ought and ought not be in libraries. We may be prejudiced against cheap serial stories or mysteries, but the children's reaction may be entirely different, and the library is supposed to serve them. If there is an expressed interest in a certain type of book, you can solicit these from private donors. The Hyde Park Neighborhood Club Study Center has sought particular types of books, which were in great demand. One was books about Negro children, another was easy readers, and another was Carolyn Keane mystery stories. While we continually look for good books to offer to the children, they also appreciate our efforts to give them what they want to read.

Homework help is a good beginning basis for starting an after-school center. Many adults have had experience in helping their own children with homework. This is a challenging area of work with children, since some who come have no tradition of having been helped, and do not know how to ask for help. They sit down, put their books in front of them, and seem to wait for adults to show them the way. A homework helper goes from one child to another, offering help as

needed. Sometimes, she asks the child what his homework assignment is, and then suggests where he can begin. If it involves reference books, she can guide him to them. Some children know how to find the material they need, but many do not. Those are the ones who concern us. While we try to encourage them to help themselves, we also try to make the experience positive by giving all the help needed. After finding a reference, the adult can read it with the child, or start him on it and go on to another child.

Of course, many of the children who come for homework need no help at all. They want to use the materials, or enjoy working with friends. It is often the "quiet ones" who sit and wait. It may have been such a child whose mother complained that, although he came to the center to do his homework regularly for a month, "his grades didn't improve at all." This kind of wishful thinking affects the children also, that somehow coming to a center is going to help them, failing to realize that no one can "learn" anything to anyone. Volunteers can only encourage and help, and feel rewarded when the children do learn how to use help and gradually, to help themselves.

Often it seems to a volunteer that the child is working in material for which his background is not adequate. The volunteer then wonders whether he should spend the time on needed background material, or work on the assignment. Because success means so much to the children, volunteers usually concentrate first on the current assignment, since our task is to help the children succeed. Then, in whatever time is available, volunteers try to give the child some additional help or drill in background skills. Of course, the more volunteers who are available, the more help the children can receive. Often, they seem to need the attention of one adult for a period of time. Other times, small groups develop who are working on a similar assignment.

Arithmetic is one area in which the children often can use background help. A good teacher continually looks for ways to add basic understanding. For instance, on a page of division problems, a child had divided and proved all the answers correctly, except for 8 divided by 4. She had put down 4 as an answer, and in order to "prove" it, had added 4 and 4 to make 8. The volunteer explained that she was dividing 8 of something by 4, suggested that she pretend that the 8 are cookies that she is dividing between herself and 3 friends. Symbols for the cookies and friends on a piece of paper helped to picture the problem. The child realized instantly that each friend would get 2 cookies. Spelling is another example. If the children can use the words in sentences, as well as to learn their spelling, of course they will benefit. They may enjoy trying to use as many of the words as possible in one sentence. Many of the children find writing a chore, and will be much more interested in such activities if they can be done orally, with the volunteer doing the writing.

Although the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club Study Center was able to operate for one year without a paid coordinator, this arrangement might not always be pos-

sible. The Hyde Park Study Center now has one paid adult, on a part-time basis, with a volunteer staff of seventy, eighteen of whom have teaching experience.

Whatever the title of the person designated as head of a study center, the job is largely one of coordination, administration, and supervision. The volunteers have to be assigned where they can be most useful, and given enough support to feel rewarded for their efforts. The children have to be shown how to use the facilities. It would seem helpful, in any study center arrangement, to have some kind of registration for the children. Although our children "sign" in, we have often had the experience that children come for a tutoring lesson, but fail to tell anyone that they are there. Sometimes, they come in and sit quietly. Without a system of knowing who is there, it would be much more difficult to help the children find their tutors.

New volunteers often begin in the library or homework room, and then later become tutors. Some volunteers seem to immediately relate to the children, and become involved. Others need much more time and supervision to find their place. We usually ask volunteers to come in to visit first, knowing that they will be better able to decide what they want to do, and our staff will have a chance to see where they fit in.

The coordinator will sometimes have to spend time with individual children. If this becomes unlimited time one day, the same children may come to expect this kind of a commitment from her, which she will be unable to give. Her main task will usually be to show staff members what they can do, and to keep the children contented, so that they will not become restless and bother other children.

Since a study center is set up for grade-school children, first graders come who cannot read well enough to occupy themselves for long. There will also be parents who will encourage their small children to come, so that they themselves can shop or go out. Although not a major problem, every study center can expect to have some children "sent" to it, to be picked up at closing time. These are usually the small children for whom there is not enough activity for their needs. The best solution seems to be to have some activities for them, and tell the parents when these activities will be, while explaining the purpose of a reading center, where such young children cannot be expected to remain for many hours.

In addition to the tutoring program, approximately 450 children are registered as members of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Study Center to use the library or to receive help with homework. Several other activities are a part of the study center program. There are several small remedial reading groups, an enrichment group for first graders, and remedial arithmetic groups. In addition, summer reading clubs offered children of all reading abilities an opportunity to read and discuss books. These groups are planned as part of the summer program because excellent teachers are then available. Such a group needs an experienced teacher who knows a great deal about children's books, so that the members of the reading club can read at individual levels of interest and ability, and at the same time

contribute to group discussions. Special activities are also offered one morning a week during the summer, and for holidays during the school year. These include story hours, folk singing, folk dancing, and a variety of enrichment activities. These programs draw upon local talent in the community.

Story-telling is also an integral part of the daily study center program. Stories are read and told, according to the availability of staff and the interests of the children. In all special activities, an effort is made to involve the children actively and make them participants instead of merely spectators.

THE CLIENTELE OF A STUDY CENTER

Study Centers should, ideally, be open to all children who wish to use them. Many very adequate and superior children will come to use the library, or to enjoy the company of their friends doing homework. Their presence is important to the children who do need help. There is no stigma attached to attending such a center, and the children can and do help each other. However, if there are inadequate neighborhood facilities for the children, a Study Center will become inundated with children who "have no place to go," and a decision may have to be made to limit attendance to those engaged in school work.

The children for whom the Study Center is most important are the "under-achievers" who have been estimated at thirty per cent of the school population. Every community in America has children who could be helped to make better use of their native ability. Most school drop-outs have had academic trouble early in their school years. Often, children with reading problems are not considered eligible for remedial help until they are two academic years behind their grade level. A Study Center can reach such children when they are only six months behind, and help to avoid more serious trouble later.

The Study Center is not designed to help children with severe emotional problems, or deep-seated reading problems. Most of the children accepted for tutoring can and do read. They mainly need encouragement and help in doing better in skills which they already have. There are community facilities available for the more severely handicapped readers. For them to again fail in a Study Center would not be a service to them. Study Centers can and should decide just which children they are equipped to serve. The schools can refer children who are under-achievers, of normal intelligence, without severe emotional or physical handicaps.

A Study Center can begin as a "quiet place," for homework help. This does not necessarily imply "library quiet." If children are going to work together they need the freedom to talk, and in a small space this can be a problem. In the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club Study Center, the noise level sometimes gets high because of the number of children involved. The staff agrees that this "busy noise" does not seem to interfere in the work of the children.

The informal atmosphere of having adults who wish to help children may make such a center very appealing to children. Children need an offer of help from adults in finding books. They do not need to be told what is proper for their "age," "reading level," or any other criterion. They need encouragement and freedom to handle books, and to make their own selections. Sometimes they select a book that is too hard for them, and no one tells them they cannot. A week later, they may bring it back with a request to "help me find a thinner book." More

often, the children read below their actual grade level or ability. If they have read the book before, they are enjoying something familiar. But no one in a library for children ought to tell children that books are too easy or too difficult for them. Unless they know personally what the child has read, they can hardly make such judgments on the basis of any guide to reading.

The Study Center, since it is used after school hours, gets children who have already spent a full day in school. Sometimes the children seem to want to be there, perhaps working part of the time, but often seeming to enjoy the atmosphere. Such children may spend their time just sitting, observing what goes on, but not doing any "obvious" work. It is good if the staff can accept the right of children to use their reading room in different ways and not feel pushed to demand that everybody "do" something all the time, or leave.

CHILDREN WITH READING PROBLEMS

There are differences from one country to another in the age when formal reading instruction is begun, but this usually starts between the ages of five and seven. Most reading authorities agree that physical maturity of the eyes is a factor in learning to read, and that such maturity is reached at about five or six years of age. There are differences in maturity between boys and girls, so that more girls are able to read earlier. Boys more often become "reading problems." We do not know how much this has to do with actual maturity, and how much it is the result of our methods of early education which have more appeal to girls.

The child who fails to read becomes a problem to his teachers, and a problem to himself. The lack of success in school leads a retarded reader to seek self-esteem in other ways. Often, he becomes the class "buffoon" or trouble-maker. Sometimes he is able to achieve in other areas such as sports or music, but eventually, this no longer compensates. For instance, a boy who is very athletic and popular but unable to keep up academically, may refuse to go out to play ball for fear the other children will somehow know that he is a "dumbbell." Whatever their reactions to their disability may be, these children usually have deep personal feelings about being "failures," and for that reason alone, people who seek to help them need to respect them without probing into their lives or problems.

The words "fun" and "easy" are the most overworked words in children's publishing in the 1960's. Reading is neither fun nor is it easy, especially for children with academic problems. An appeal to maturity and school success seems a more honest approach.

The Hyde Park Neighborhood Club Study Center serves children of all levels of academic achievement who have diverse social backgrounds. Some are members of a minority group and show some of the problems of children from deprived homes.

We know that satisfactory family life is not limited to any one income bracket. In order to understand disadvantaged city children, concepts such as "culturally deprived" have become standard terms. While most culturally deprived children come from low income families, low income by itself does not invariably imply cultural deprivation.

Deprived children often have deprived parents, who are unable to give them some of the basic ingredients required for normal maturity. In these families, there may not be enough resources to go around, including emotional energy. In the extreme, psychiatrists have found that such parents in crowded living quarters sometimes react to the children as a group, instead of as individuals. For instance, if one child annoys them, parents may react by slapping whichever child is nearest.

In extreme cases of emotional deprivation, the children fail to develop the minimum self-identity which they must have to cope with their environment.

Learning includes an emotional experience, so that ideally, a child will come to school with a strong sense of individual worth and self-respect, or achieve such feelings early in school. Self-respect is the basic need of all disadvantaged children, even when there is not an extreme lack of self-identity. Kindergarten and first-grade teachers who work successfully with such children in our city schools use the children's names extensively, as a first means of impressing them with the fact that they are individuals. Such teachers use the names of the children in phonics, in songs, and in daily conversation, as an effective first step in bringing about self-awareness and self-respect.

Aside from their psychological and social maturity, these children also lack much of the "know-how" that would help them to succeed in school. We know that success in school depends upon a whole set of "middle-class" experiences and values. Learning involves exploration, and many children have been discouraged from both physical exploration of their environment and mental exploration of asking questions, talking, and listening. They have not been listened to as much, or read to as much as have other children. The values of educational achievement may have been impressed upon them, but the parents may have been less able to prepare the child for success in school. Encouragement and opportunities to "see" and "hear" a variety of experiences, physical skills with school materials such as scissors and crayons, encouragement in visual and auditory discrimination may not be developed as well as it is in other children of the same age. The traditional pre-reading experiences which are offered in kindergarten may also not be meaningful to these children because of their background.

In deprived areas, teachers are aware that they are using materials and methods quite foreign to the lives of many of their children. They sometimes feel that they are teaching English as a "foreign language," and that many of the materials they use, geared to the middle-class suburban child, are quite "foreign" to the lives of the children they teach. They have found that they can assume very little by way of a common experience among culturally deprived city children. One first grade teacher was supposed to introduce the word "lemon" to the class, and found that not one child knew what a lemon was, or remembered ever having seen one.

The initial attitude of deprived children toward school has been called "neutral," in contrast to the positive attitude of "middle-class" children. Middle-class children have been impressed with the value of learning, and may have a conception of reward for intellectual effort. In the absence of an appropriate background, deprived children still express a basically friendly attitude during the earliest school experiences. Teachers have, for years, been impressed with how these basically curious and receptive children change in attitude later, as they fail in school, and become hostile and/or apathetic. In later years, this group contributes a large share of the "hard-to-handle," the "underachievers," and eventually, the

"drop-outs." We are convinced that children have to learn to read early in school because later school success can now be predicted quite accurately by the end of the third grade.

Teachers who are skilled in teaching beginning reading tend to be concentrated in the primary grades. In upper grades the teachers have a curriculum to follow, and have neither the training nor the time to "begin" again where earlier teachers have failed. Children who are behind in reading have usually failed at least one grade in school. Their self-esteem is at a lower level than it was when they began learning to read, and our methods are less adequate to help them.

Many of the disadvantages of the children who come to us are not visible at first. Poverty in America has been called "invisible." It is impressive to visit schools in very poor neighborhoods and see that these children cannot be identified by their dress. We know that many of them have an actual low standard of living which is not only the result of less actual money, but often also a lack of "know-how" in matters of budgeting.

We have found several children using our library who could not bear to part with a book that they had checked out. It was, for them, the first book they had ever selected that they could read. They carried the books about for weeks, seeming to sleep and eat with them. We were able to give them books of their own and explain to them that the library books are "borrowed" and returned so that other children can read them, and that they can be taken out again. Other children have told us that they have no magazines at home to cut up for school assignments, and we are able to keep them supplied.

Some of our ideas about the disadvantaged child have had to be revised. For years people talked about the "broken homes" of these children as their great disadvantage compared to so-called middle-class children. To come from a broken home is a real disadvantage. However, it has recently been found by actual study of such families, that although the home is broken in the legal sense, so-called lower-class children often do have the support of an extended family that is not available to middle-class children with their small families and high mobility. The broken home is no less a problem, but the positive aspects of lower-class families were not considered before.

The term "culturally deprived" seems especially unfortunate. To speak of these children as "disadvantaged" seems more accurate and appropriate. It makes clear that we are talking about "advantages" that some children have not had. The danger with any term used to describe the children of the poor is that the differences between such children and others come to be more important than the similarities. Some people, impressed with the differences, have decided that a different type of education is the answer. While better and more imaginative materials are obviously needed in our schools, the right of every child, no matter what his background, to a basic competence in academic skills should concern us more than questions of his "differences."

The culture of the lower-class child has not been very well studied, but certain "strengths" of these children impress those who have worked with them. One is their loyalty to those who help them. Teachers in city schools who have helped such children command genuine loyalty. Children attach themselves to a Study Center such as the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club runs and become loyal volunteers, giving freely of their time and energy in seeming identification with the people who have helped them.

To draw on these strengths, the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club Study Center has informally had children help each other. But the children want to do more. Children who can read a little better than they could before become interested in the other children who come for help. If a child is farther behind in reading, the spontaneous reaction is "maybe I can help him." This can be as important for efforts in building self-respect as the original help given to the child who now identifies with the tutors and wants to help others.

Individual competition is the basis of much school achievement. Perhaps in work with disadvantaged children, we should take the cue from their own behavior and think in terms of "group" or "team" participation. A study of migrant workers showed that the children stayed together, and older children were held back in school to "take care" of younger siblings. If there were three children of school age, only the middle child was at his approximate grade level. The older child was held back, and the younger often pushed ahead, so that all three could be in the same grade and "stick together."

Children often come to a Study Center as a family, usually because an older child is responsible for younger siblings. Children with such strong sibling relationships (or whose parents are unable to help them) often look to their brothers and sisters for help with homework. These children also respond well to help from high school and college students.

We have been impressed that, as the children learn to read, they also learn to talk. The group choral reading of poems that has been done has met with great success. The children who read poorly seem to enjoy it the most. They follow along carefully, reading every word they can and chime in on any "chorus." Schools recognize the natural sense of rhythm that disadvantaged children often have, by letting them sing. Since poor speech is so common with the children we see, help in reading should include work in developing better speech.

The children with whom we work show a mixture of immaturity and sophistication. There is no doubt that children from poorer families have often assumed more responsibility in the home, particularly with their younger siblings. Their "premature" sophistication impresses some tutors. It is often a maturity that is out of line with the rest of their abilities, seeming to be a "cover-up" for lack of real maturity. Whatever the reasons, we can assume it is part of the groping for self-respect and self-esteem that all children share.

These children may also express their "need for glamour" in ways different

from those of middle-class children. In settlement houses, story-tellers have found that the children do not respond to the "family stories of here and now," as children in suburbs do. They prefer stories of kings, castles, knights—stories far removed from the here and now. In an unusually successful high school for difficult girls in a large city, the policeman who is stationed at the door opens the door for each student as she arrives, and says "Good Morning" to her—in French. When the cooking class makes rice with chicken, they call it "rice pilaf," and at Friday morning assemblies, every girl with a good scholastic and attendance record for the week receives a corsage. Part of the success of young college students working with these children is probably due to the "glamour" of having someone from such a setting take an interest in a child who may never have known a college student before.

When such children feel comfortable with us, we find them happily reading fairy tales and folk tales that we assumed all children had heard years before. These children missed them because of their difficulties in reading, and because they asked librarians for books "for a sixth grader" instead of for one that they could read.

Many articles about deprived children are full of "gloom and doom." They say that nothing can be done unless millions of dollars are spent, many specialists involved, classes made much smaller, and such children helped by the age of two or three. Clearly, our country will have to spend more money to educate its culturally deprived youngsters. Yet it is necessary to realize that schools are a major agency for socializing and educating children, regardless of their backgrounds.

We know that the failure rate among disadvantaged children is very high. Some schools in deprived areas have found that as much as forty per cent of the total failing in the school occurred at the end of the first grade. Eighty-five per cent of the failures occurred before third grade level. So it is in these early years that children have been labeled "failures," and this failure involves reading in most cases, since this is the most crucial criterion in deciding who will fail. The children who have been allowed to "get by" because of the reluctance of schools to fail more children are equally handicapped, because they have to struggle to achieve in work that is beyond their development.

Some organizational arrangements help schools to improve the education of disadvantaged children. One of these, Tesla School, at 6657 South Kimbark Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, under Dr. Jerome Gilbert, has a carefully designed and articulated multi-graded system, which plans for continuous individual development of academic skills. Children go as rapidly as they are able through a carefully planned sequence of reading, language arts, and arithmetic, with evaluation every five weeks, and great flexibility between groups. The children work at their individual levels in each of the three fields, which is only possible by having the whole primary unit organized to permit this. It is important that progress in any

of the three areas be recognized and encouraged, since children often succeed in arithmetic, reading, or language arts at a more rapid rate than in all three. This system increases the opportunities for success and self-respect for the child. The flexibility between classes allows the teachers to recognize differences in growth in abilities in the three areas. The organization achieves "workable groups," so that children are working at their actual level in at least three major areas.

At Tesla School, the four years of primary work are designed to be completed in three years by some, four years by the majority, and five years by a group who need longer time because of their disadvantaged background. There is no failing until the end of third grade, when the group which has been together for some time stays back for one year to try to bring them up to beginning fourth grade, since they are taking the same academic program as the other children, although at a slower rate. This experiment was carried out in an over-crowded school, with large classes, without the help of outside funds or personnel.

Such programs as the Tesla experiment seem to be a direct and promising approach to the problems of basic competence and self-respect for children. Other experimental programs to help deprived children have attempted to give the children some of the cultural enrichment that they have missed. Like Tesla School, we have taken academic competency as our starting point, feeling that this is a crucial area in which we are equipped to help. If we can help children to achieve in reading, we can help them to find a variety of books that will "broaden their horizons" according to their own interests.

Nevertheless, we are very aware of the limited background and social experience of many of the children who come to us. We often think of a community resource that would be meaningful to a particular child. For instance, the boy who read about submarines and knew a great deal about them, and who had been to the Museum of Science and Industry, but had never seen the submarine there because he could not afford to. Taking him to see a real submarine may seem more important than exploring other interests. We also sometimes receive donations of tickets to cultural events, and can offer special outings to all of the children.

The needs of deprived children often seem overwhelming. But if we are concerned with what we can offer, and even more important, what they can accept, we have found that work with them is most rewarding. Our tutors are impressed with how much a little help means to a child. When a child does a successful piece of schoolwork for the first time, and walks out as if he owned a piece of the world, you realize that he does. The work he did himself is his achievement. The fact that he could not have done it without you makes it, in a way, your achievement too. But each step we help the child take makes the next one easier, whether he takes the next step with us or in school.

AN APPROACH TO TUTORING

Tutoring children who are not achieving adequately is, basically, good reading instruction. It is designed to help children who are not achieving at the level of their ability and/or their academic standing. They are in difficulty because their reading skills are not up to the level they ought to be. This varies from being a few months behind, to being several years behind. Experienced teachers can help non-readers, but they are not the clientele of a Study Center, and should not be assigned to volunteers without training.

The basic principles of teaching reading have not changed very much in recent years. Fortunately, the old controversy between "sight" reading and "phonics training" is no longer important. We now believe that reading is a complicated process involving both kinds of skills. Children start with sight words in first grade, but they already have had some pre-reading work in kindergarten, and phonics work is continued through the early years of reading.

What has changed in the last decade is the wealth of material available which may cause a beginning tutor to wonder where to begin. A first grade reader published in 1900 mentions "phonics, the need for familiar material (in this case, stories of farm life, since that is where the children lived) and the repetition of words for reinforcement." Today, most reading is taught by the use of one of the standard readers. These are meant to teach the mechanics of how to read, and only the mechanics. Fortunately, there are supplementary books at every level, using the same words in different ways. An abundance of controlled vocabulary books give children helpful reinforcement at every level of reading.

Some experienced teachers never use a reader, but prefer to teach the child from the abundance of simple material now available. There are graded sets of stories that begin with a pre-primer and continue through third grade level. Variety of material and the freedom to read whatever appeals to a child are both important.

Teachers of beginning reading are encouraged to let children dictate their own stories to supplement the school materials. Often, in a classroom, such original materials are limited to materials that the class dictates cooperatively. These are more personal than the school materials, since they involve class activities. However, everyone's story is actually no one's story. Some teachers encourage children to dictate or write about their own lives or interests. These stories are typed or printed and kept in a folder. The children enjoy making their own story books and reading what they have dictated. The Study Center makes use of both standardized readers and original materials in its remedial work.

Most children who learn to read easily have had experience in being read to. They have the image of parents and older siblings who can read. They have exten-

sive vocabularies and curiosity. They may have scribbled letters for years, or pretended to "read" stories which they knew by heart. They have told stories about their paintings and drawings. Pre-reading visual and auditory experiences have prepared them to discriminate in the sounds and sights of printed material. The introduction of reading normally comes as the culmination of a background called "readiness." Even then, the first readers need to be interpreted to the children because the words printed in the book tell only part of the story. A limited vocabulary is used to teach words, but it is up to the teacher to personalize and make the "stories" have some meaning for the children. Moreover, many children who need remedial help have not had adequate pre-school background for reading. Some older retarded readers have startled their teachers by their surprise in finding that the stories in readers are supposed to represent people actually talking. To them the words have remained just so many words. New materials which are not so far removed from the world of city children will help, but the material itself will always be secondary to the skill of the person using it.

Readers have traditionally started with the family, since that is assumed to be the center of the life of the beginning reader. (The families have usually been white suburban families.) It is hard to select a core of interest for all children because of the diversity of backgrounds. One new set of readers starts with the word "streets"—and others will begin with other words. The "real" world of a beginning reader is limited only by the bounds of his imagination and the materials we provide may all seem pallid or meaningless. One school has experimented with mimeographing stories written by fifth graders and sending them down to the lower grades as reading material. The younger children think they are superior to their reading books. By having a variety of familiar and new material, plus encouragement to write his own, we hope that every child will learn to communicate with us, and want to share in the development of better skills of communication.

The principles of teaching reading are the same as those of any other teaching. We try to start from where the child is (not in grade placement but in actual achievement) and to motivate him to continue by offering teaching in logical, sequential steps to the next level. He learns by having the teaching related to what he already knows, reinforced by using the same words in different contexts, and by feelings of reward for his efforts. Sometimes it is a matter of bringing some reading skills up to the level of the others. Quite often the classroom teacher has a very clear idea of the basis of the child's troubles and can help with suggestions. We have found that by observation and the use of teaching materials, we can find some of the problems that cause a child to fail in reading, and help him to read better. Even a little help often gives him such a boost that he is more willing to try. Parents and teachers have been able to see the success that, in turn, encourages him to go further.

The Study Center is not a therapeutic facility. There are community re-

sources available for help in diagnosis when it becomes a problem. This is particularly important in cases of physical disability such as the need for glasses, or a question of severe hearing or speech difficulty. The most common concern is with eyesight and it is helpful for a Study Center to have a consultant willing to test the children's eyes either without charge or for a nominal fee. Case work or group work referrals can be made to the Neighborhood Club.

Because our center focuses on helping grade-school children, we have not developed a pre-school readiness program. Such a program could be developed with careful planning and supervision.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TUTORING

The first time you meet a child, you should make sure that you know his name and how to pronounce it properly. If his name has an obvious nickname, does he prefer to be called by that? This is important, since we know that self-respect is a basic problem of a child who fails in school.

We have been impressed, at the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club Study Center, that many children mispronounce or are vague about the names of their classroom teachers. We want to recognize these children as individuals, and we want them to know us as individuals too, instead of as just another adult. After the child tells you his name, tell him yours and write it down for him. Pronounce it, and tell him a little bit about yourself—where you grew up, where you live, and especially exactly when you will be available to see him. The appointment times are to be written down on a card with your name, and put into a folder for the child to take home. Each student should have his own folder to carry his materials. A casual question such as "Have you always lived in Chicago?" will show your interest in him. Also, acknowledge the source of referral—the school. It may be appropriate then to ask the child how he thinks we can help him. Your attitude of willingness to help may be more meaningful.

We do not want children to get the idea that they are referred for outside help because they are the "hopeless" or "worst" readers. This is by no means true, since we deliberately plan to help mainly where there is strong evidence that the child can do better. It may help to say that many children of various ages and ability have come for help. The reading score will show something about the extent of help needed. One time to offer reassurance could be after the child successfully reads easy material to you. Then you can honestly say that he reads well at that level, but that schoolwork at his present level must be difficult. Tutoring will offer him a chance to "catch up" on some reading skills, so that schoolwork will be more rewarding to him.

Since the children know that they are coming for reading help, it is well to get on to the first reading in order to relieve their anxiety. When they are referred by a school, we are given a reading score. This is a complicated score of various kinds of ability, including the mechanics of reading, comprehension and reasoning ability. In general, it is safer to begin with material below the actual score. If it is obviously too easy, the child has a sense of achievement, and you can go on to the next level. But if you have to go back to simpler materials because you over-estimated his ability, it is another defeat for him. Success is especially good for these children, since they have had so little of it, and that is another reason for making the first reading easy. Explain to the child that you want to hear him read so that you can help him. Perhaps he can select from sev-

eral books which you have ready. Then listen to him read.

Reading problems are of many types, but these are some general patterns. Many children do not know enough about phonics, although they have all had some in school. They are unable to sound out words, so they either falter or substitute something vaguely like what is in the book. They often know the sight vocabulary, and little else. Others know how to sound out big words, but miss the small ones or confuse them constantly. All second and third-grade readers confuse some of these words. But if there is a pattern of continual confusion, use a basic word set to see just how many of these sight words are a problem. (These sets of two hundred words make up seventy-five per cent of the material in primary readers.)

After listening to the child read aloud, you will at least have mental notes about "how" he reads, so that you can discuss this with a supervisor. If you can see a definite problem of "sounding out" words, or lack of knowledge of sight words, you can begin right there. Covering part of a big word and encouraging the child to look at it sometimes helps him to sound out a word. (You may sound out a few words first, to show how it is done, and then let him try one.) Words that cannot be sounded out should be told to him immediately. And never let a child flounder, for more than a matter of seconds, before telling him the word. If the problem is with sight words, you can explain what they are—words we memorize to recognize at sight so that they "pop" out like the answers to the multiplication tables. Five to ten of these written on cards to be studied together, and continued in the next lesson will show the child that you are "doing something" concrete to help him. The cards can be put into his folder for possible review during the week. This is the folder that the child carries home. It can be a large manila envelope, with his name on it. His appointment card, books for suggested reading, word cards or any material that you make for him can go into this folder.

Besides sight and phonetic clues, reading is also done by contextual clues. If a child reads the sentence, "The dog lapped up the milk with his little red _____," and hesitates, you should ask what word would make sense. Sometimes you may want to encourage the children to make reasonable guesses. If a child substitutes words which still make sense, you will not want to stop him continually. Understanding and making sense of reading is as important as mechanical skill. But if a substitution makes no sense, I would tell him that it doesn't make sense to me, and "let's look at the sentence again."

You will want to learn manuscript printing which is used in all primary grades. Ask for a booklet illustrating this. Don't worry that you are not expert in writing manuscript. The children like us to be human too—and often enjoy the fact that they can print or draw better than we can.

We can assume that children who do not read well have not read very much. The problem is to motivate children who have never read (voluntarily, on their own free time) to do so. You may ask the child if he can tell you of a book he enjoyed reading, or listening to. Sometimes they have never read a book outside of

class; sometimes they can remember having "plowed through" one library book. Many of them have been impressed with a children's classic that the teacher read. If children read beyond beginning second-grade level, you can easily assure them that there are books they can read, and you will look for some. (I have said, "I will try to find books that you won't mind reading.")

Approximately one hundred children were tutored in the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club Study Center during the first year. Not many of these children had read library books. For many of them, one important contribution was to make books available to them outside of the classroom, often for the first time.

Our tutors watch for any sign of interest as a starting point. We ask the child what he is especially interested in, realizing that if these children had well-defined interests, some kind teacher or librarian would have helped them find appropriate materials. But if there is an expressed interest in anything, it gives us somewhere to begin to look for books. If the child prefers baseball, it still gives us the information we want to know, because we can find books about baseball and baseball heroes. At the same time, we offer a variety of books and encourage variety in reading, because our big job is to develop interests. Since many of the children with whom we work are quite non-verbal, it is hard to discover their interests. From one lesson to the next, we watch for response to whatever we offer, and consult with each other for help.

The main job in tutoring is to offer something of interest, and then to make use of your observations to offer more. If you do not have much experience with children's books, the thirty-five cent edition, "Parent's Guide to Children's Reading," gives lists of good books. The hard cover edition, "Teacher's Guide to Children's Books," is far more useful. These books will tell you a great deal about children's books. Children's librarians are most helpful, in guiding you to books of an appropriate reading level and subject.

Guides to children's reading divide the books into sections by "appropriate age-group." This helps teachers get started, but even a casual glance at such book guides shows how inappropriate any arbitrary age-grouping is. Poem lists for fifth and sixth-graders are used successfully by first grade teachers. Many children with reading disabilities can and do enjoy books listed for much younger children.

Children are all too aware of age-grading, so it does help to offer materials in the privacy of a tutoring session. The same materials offered in the front library room may be rejected by the child, because he does not want to "lose face" in front of other children. The folder in which he carries his books, plus the assurance that books can be good, no matter what their "reading level," can help. It also helps to be completely honest. If you are convinced that such books can help strengthen the foundation for later success by giving valuable practice in reading, tell the child so.

Easy reading books can also be made more interesting to children by your

knowing more about the subject. When you look for books, think not only of the child's interests, but also which ones you can add to, by giving him more information on the subject. It does not have to be "bookish" information. If he reads about gypsies, and you remember having seen them as a child, you can tell him about them. If you have visited other areas of America or the world, you can make the books about these places much more meaningful to him. A subject that particularly interested you may give you some background to add to the material in beginning books. For instance, simple books on mechanics and tools might lead to discussion about complicated machinery which still uses these simple principles.

Many tutors offer a small reward for every five books reported on, or every ten books. A notebook is made up of theme paper, with a construction paper cover for the child to carry home in his folder. Original stories can be encouraged, to count as books. Sometimes the children give the reports orally at first, but we can learn more about their reaction to books and what materials to offer later by having even a one-sentence report about the books. Encourage the child to tell whether or not he liked the book, and why. The very idea that books can be criticized is new to some children. The fact that we are concerned with his interests and want to know what "he" wants to read may be important to him.

After being rewarded for his efforts, he will transfer his learning to his life outside of the tutoring situation. Sometimes, this transfer comes rather quickly. Children who formerly fooled around or "skimmed" through books during library hour to pretend an interest that was not there, begin to read during library time in school, and tell us about what they have read. Some parents tell us that their children turn from television and begin to read. Others notice the increased vocabularies of the children, and some report that the children begin to try to read newspapers. At first, a tangible reward such as a small prize has meaning to the child when the inherent value of reading does not.

The children need to talk, to relate to you and to show you how to help them. Sometimes, you have to wait for some time for them to begin to talk. One child said nothing for at least two whole sessions. If they tell you about a favorite TV show or a movie they have seen, it will help you to understand their comprehension and ability to relate the sequence and meaning of an experience. If they can talk about the books they read with you, or at home, you will get some idea about their ability to understand what they have read.

Story telling-pictures—magazine pictures mounted on construction paper—can be used to encourage the children to tell stories. You can write them or let the children write them. They may want to keep them at the Study Center to take them home. We have a few story-telling pictures, cut from such magazines as Life and Ebony, mounted on construction paper, placed in the front of the file. We also have a collection of magazines to give to the children. If your child spends extra hours at the Study Center, as many of them do, you can encourage him to

look for a picture he wants to tell you about, or that he would like to have, and mount it on construction paper for him to take home.

Certain problems are common enough to our children to plan help for these. Their speech is so often a problem, either because it is careless and indistinct or inhibited, that most tutors make use of phonics materials. In the beginning, they are useful tools to help us communicate to the child, and help him communicate to us.

With the phonics books, we first use the set available to all teachers. This helps the child begin to talk to us, by going through some of the exercises with him. Each book is a complete review of phonetic principles. Some teachers use these as a basis for starting off with games on a magic slate, or verbally. Children may play "opposites" (What's the opposite of hot?), rhyme words, think of "homonyms," or make up lists of words or draw pictures of things that begin with certain sounds. The phonics books offer help in analyzing just which consonants and vowels the child does confuse in speech and reading, so that you can work on specific sounds, rather than waiting until you discover these problems through lengthy observation.

We have noticed that very few of the children who need remedial help know what "rhyming" is. Some have been confused by whether we rhyme the beginnings of the ends of words. However, they particularly enjoy word games, and often select stories in rhyme.

In later years of school much reading is for the purpose of getting specific information. Exercises are available in workbooks, which can be bought in bookstores selling school supplies. These can be used as tools to develop skill in getting the meaning from written paragraphs. This helps in testing "know-how" and in all later school work. I prefer to have the child get meaning from stories first, but at some point, you may want to introduce some of these materials to help him with skills which are especially valued in school. Some children can read a comprehension test silently and score "zero" on it—then read it aloud to you and score one-hundred per cent. They can also respond differently depending upon their mood and their relationship to the person offering the exercise.

Many children enjoy being read to. Others seem overwhelmed by the closeness, or the superior reading ability of the tutor. You may want to limit the reading to introducing the books the child may read at home. You may listen to him read the first several pages, or go through the book with him for unusual words. As a minimum introduction, the names of the characters in the story ought to be read with him. We encourage the children to ask for help at home with words they do not know. Some of the children's parents are known to be illiterate, but several children have an older brother or sister who can and do help them.

At any level of reading, it can help the child to have him take turns in reading pages with you. This may seem overwhelming to him at first, and then it is best to wait until he reads well enough or is comfortable enough to share reading

aloud with you. The children listen carefully when we read, often seeming to try to discover vicariously what reading is "supposed" to sound like. We notice, then, that they try to read as we do.

The advantage of reading to the child is that his interests and understanding are almost always far ahead of his reading ability. So when you look for materials that will interest him, think in terms of a story, poem or book that you like and can share with him, as well as materials that are at his reading level. A short story that can be finished in one session may seem best as a first attempt. If reading aloud seems very successful, you can then begin a book to be read a chapter at the end of each session.

By starting with reading, and then moving on to phonics games or other activities, we are getting through the biggest trial for the child—"having to read out loud to someone"—and also showing him that other activities will follow. If a particular part of the reading lesson is most difficult, I would do that in the early part of the session. You can also set time limits. You might say "We will spend ten minutes at this today," and then stick to it.

Children who receive remedial help are sometimes hungry, because learning is work for them. This is true of all children after school, and some children come to us directly from school in the late afternoon. It is not possible to offer food in our Study Center, but we can give them a cookie or a piece of fruit when they leave. It can be put into a sandwich bag for them to carry out in their folders. City teachers are aware of the problem of teaching hungry children. Psychologically, speaking and reading are oral activities, and it helps to satisfy a child's oral needs when we expect him to perform. The expectation of a snack for the way home seems to mean a good deal to many of our children. We find it more appropriate to use snacks such as fruit or cookies rather than candy and gum.

These children are also apt to tire easily. They have already had a day in school. In addition, people who do not learn to read often have used a great deal of energy to keep from learning. Although they want very much to be helped, they have to overcome years of habits of not learning and not achieving. The lesson should, therefore, be flexible, after you have used some of the reading materials. Some children become fascinated with the phonics books and want to go on for a half hour. Others become tired, and it makes more sense to allow the child to relax, to listen to a story, or have a few minutes of fun. Magic slates can be used for academic work and then for a paper and pencil game such as Tic-Tac-Toe or Hangman. Names of ball clubs, cities, streets, movie stars, etc., can be used in playing Hangman. Paper folding is fun for all girls. If you can make something at the end of the period and give it to the child to take home, that is fine. If a child likes to draw, there is a tablet of art paper and various materials in the cupboard for him to use. You may exchange riddles with them.

Poetry seems to have a special appeal to the children we see. We have successfully used poetry when no other approach would interest a child. The one au-

thor the children often know is Dr. Seuss, and his combination of nonsense and rhyme seems to have universal appeal.

Our greatest advantage, compared to classroom teaching, is that we have a less formal setting and a more intimate relationship to offer. We also can and do make use of less "schoolish" reading materials. Daily newspapers and neighborhood papers, TV guides, baseball scorecards, maps that vary from neighborhood maps to world maps, and a borrowed tape recorder are used.

We encourage the children to bring their school homework, since it helps us to know what they are doing in school. If a child does bring it, you may start with it, instead of any other new material. You can get the same impressions of what he does with his work, and the troubles he has with it, by working on homework. The immediate help you give him so that he can perform better the very next day in school may mean more to him than any introduction of outside materials. We have found that the children do not usually bring work with them, and so you have to have materials prepared.

These children come because of difficulty in reading, but we know that this carries over into the rest of their school work. Perhaps there will be an arithmetic score or the teacher will tell you that the child also needs help in arithmetic. If the children bring their homework, it is easier to see where they are, but if not, it is not too difficult to find out some of their problems in arithmetic.

I would bring some materials to the session, not necessarily the first time, but later on, that have nothing whatsoever to do with school. This could be a set of baseball cards, to figure out scores and runs, or a map. I use maps a good deal. Some of these children are transient, and when they see a map, will volunteer where they have lived and be interested in tracing their travels. Others will not, and then it is up to you. You can take an imaginary trip with a map and find out a good deal about a child's arithmetic. With an older child, for instance, I may say something like "Pretend that you are 21 and that you have your driver's license, and a car. You and a friend have jobs in Cleveland and you are going there to start to work. What kind of a car do you have? Let's pretend that you each have so much money for the trip and you are going to share expenses." Then you can look at a map and estimate how long the trip will take and when they should start out in the morning. You can fill the car with gas at so much per gallon and let the child figure out the cost. Then he can deduct this from his imaginary expense account. This can go on throughout the trip; looking for a place to stop for lunch, figuring out imaginary bills and deducting them.

By the time you have gone through an imaginary trip with him, you have a pretty good idea about whether he knows the basic multiplication, addition, and subtraction facts. Many children, however, know these facts, but when faced with a problem, do not know which process to use. Therefore, they indiscriminately multiply or add. The teacher does not have time to find out from their answers why it is wrong and therefore, the answer is simply wrong. If you can find out

something about the child's problems with arithmetic, you can plan remedial work. You can do it in the way of a review if you don't want to go through a long imaginary trip or other plan. Just suggest that you review the tables and see where he runs into trouble. Then make up a set of five to ten cards for him to take home and study.

With arithmetic help, we often find children counting on their fingers, and give them other objects to use, which is already an improvement. They use cubes, toothpicks, buttons, or counters. If there is time to make up problems calling the objects by names such as valentines or comic books, the process may come through along with the mechanical skill. If the children can make up problems for themselves or for you, they will benefit. A basic sheet of facts of all the combinations that add up to make 5 or to make 6, can be given as a reference to study at home or to continue with during the next lesson. A sheet of paper showing all the multiplication tables horizontally and vertically is a good reference sheet for children to have. The children like work with magic slates and clocks made from paper plates for learning to tell time. Magic squares are fun to do, or they can learn to count by 2's, 5's and 10's. They enjoy the fact that every answer in the multiplication tables of 9 adds up to make 9.

There are a variety of educational games at the Study Center which tutors and homework helpers use. They can be used to help understand a child's problems, or to add a change in pace to the end of a lesson. They include a variety of flashcards, phonics and number games.

A volunteer working with one child or a small group can often spot difficulties that are not readily detected by the teacher. One child who had done good daily work in arithmetic received a failing grade on a test. She brought the test in to the Study Center—her assignment was to do it over. The volunteer could see no pattern at all to the child's answers. After observing her work, she found that when the child added a column of figures and got "21" for an answer, she wrote down the "2" and carried the "1." This was a consistent error in her work.

Avoid giving definite "assignments" in tutoring. We are not classroom teachers. We have no captive audience. It is fine to suggest and encourage the child to read at home, but if you assign work with a teacher's authority (that you do not have), you put the child in a difficult situation. If he does not work at home, what can he do? Stay away from the next lesson or become belligerent and unhappy because he has again "failed"? As long as you suggest something that is possible and not burdensome, you have a chance of success. If the child does not find time to do it, you have the material in his folder so that you can continue where you left off, and wait a while for your relationship to become better before you again suggest the possibility of his helping himself during the week.

Some of the materials we use are homemade. Any cardboard can be used to make multiplication flashcards. Shirt cardboards make very nice ones. For the small children, we have made "Number Books" by stapling sheets of paper to-

gether, and providing a cover which says "George's Number Book." The numbers from 1 to 10 are written at the top, one on each page. Then the child is encouraged to draw or cut out from magazines or catalogs "three" of something to illustrate the "3" page, "eight" of something to illustrate the "8" page, etc. With alphabet books, a capital "A" and a small "a" at the top of a page can then be illustrated by drawing or cutting out something that begins with the "a" sound. There are always children available who like to draw and are willing to help provide pictures to illustrate whatever is not readily available in magazines.

The sessions normally last anywhere from thirty minutes to an hour. One session a week is the minimum. Generally, two lessons a week are preferred, and assumed to be much more helpful. Thirty minutes, twice a week, may be all that the tutor can give. Sometimes, the lessons are set for forty-five minutes. Some children hate to let go, and stay an hour, and then leave reluctantly. If your session is limited to once a week, forty-five minutes or an hour ought to be possible. But if you ever feel that the child is uncomfortable and it would help to end early, you should. Whatever you have decided is the time you can spend should be the limit, and you may have to say "That's enough work for today," or "Our time is up for today."

While your attitude should remain positive and encouraging always, experience shows that the children's need for continual help and approval gradually lessens as they gain skill in reading. A common thread running through the reports of tutors is the continual need for support and encouragement at first, and a gradual willingness and ability to work alone. Everyone responds better to praise and assurance of success, but only honest praise is meaningful to children. They are much more honest than adults, and respond more to the basic attitudes of people than to their words. If an adult's basic attitude is "this kid is surely never going anywhere," the child is apt to sense it, no matter what words the adult uses.

There ought in any lesson to be at least some success in some activity. Otherwise, the child can hardly be expected to go on making the effort to learn. (This success may be in drawing, which many of the children enjoy. It may be in showing you how "good" he is in arithmetic.) Without some feeling of achievement, most children will decide that it was not worth the initial effort of asking for help.

Even the way you criticize when you have to, is important. One tutor asked "Do you know that a period means to stop?" Obviously, the child had to say "Yes," or appear stupid. It would have been better to say matter-of-factly, "A period means the end of a sentence. See if you can show me where the sentences end by pausing there," and then praise the child's efforts.

Although adults realize the need for honesty with children, they still sometimes show dishonesty by pretending to miss problems or fail to win games. Some tutors take turns with the flashcards or tables and deliberately make mistakes, thinking that the child will feel more at ease. In some games he may win

because of chance or because you give him advantages. You can let a child win at Tic-Tac-Toe occasionally without appearing basically dishonest. In "drill" activities, you can tell the child that you are going to make mistakes and want him to "catch" you. That is an honest approach that he may enjoy. He will not enjoy your pretending to be stupid, by not knowing words or multiplication tables. This does not mean that you have to show your superiority to the child—he is aware of it. However, a child does not need to become uncomfortable about how much the adult knows, as long as the main emphasis is on him and what he is achieving.

The most important asset any tutor can have is an attitude of giving freely to the children. Especially with children who feel that they have failed or that society has failed them, an attitude of respect and willingness to give freely are most important. This implies that the tutor will have something to give. He will have material to offer, and will offer the materials and his help freely with no strings attached. He will respect the privacy of the child and not probe into his life in any way, but be satisfied to give freely and wait for the child to tell him whatever he wants to about himself.

Some tutors, in their eagerness not to appear authoritarian, ask the child, "What do you want to do?" and expect the child to structure the lesson. This is unfair. A good teacher comes to class with some ideas of what she hopes to teach, and some materials. She is flexible. She accepts ideas and materials that the children bring, but the structuring of the lesson is still her job. Sometimes, the children bring their own ideas. One boy brought over a globe at the beginning of his first lesson, and said that he wanted to "take a trip." He spun the globe and landed in Japan. Then he talked about how he would travel there and back, and about how far it was. At each succeeding lesson, he began the same way, taking an imaginary trip first, and then "landing" for his reading lesson. There is a world of difference between this willingness to accept what the child brings, and putting pressure on a child who looks to you for guidance by saying "What do you want to do?"

There are choices, certainly, for the children. A choice of books to read, and a choice of games for the last few minutes of the lesson, is fine, but these choices should be limited to a meaningful few. Remember the experience of the beginning teacher who asked a child in a reading group, "Would you like to read the next page?" The child smiled and politely said "No." She turned to another child and said, "Read the next page," and tried not to offer children choices in the future that were not really valid choices.

The limit of choices also makes them comprehensible. To offer books in the front library room, where there are 1,000 choices, is not nearly as good as to offer two or three which you have selected, and which you can introduce by discussing the books, the characters, and the plots. The first one may prove interesting enough so that the child will want to read it, and from his reactions, you will have a better idea of what to look for the next time.

The goals of a Study Center are to increase the competence and the self-respect of children who come for help. These two needs of the children are so interwoven that a contribution to one reinforces the other. We know that children under-achieve because they are not able to show what they can do, or use the ability they have. They do not have the academic skills other children their age have, so their self-respect suffers. While we are always aware that our job is both to improve skills and attitude, we know that helping in either area helps in the other. In one of our children, this was very dramatically evident. The child was having a difficult time in third grade, doing badly in all academic work. His reading level tested middle second grade. The tutor started him on very simple reading, and realized that he felt most insecure and needed most of all to succeed. She brought a first-grade activity workbook. The child did it perfectly with great pride and care. He spent his lesson time on basic background with this teacher, and literally did nothing at "his" level. However, his third grade work simultaneously improved. (With some children, this would be the wrong approach. It may seem more important to help them achieve at a higher level part of the time or even to be challenged a little.)

Obviously, with one or two lessons a week, our main job will always be to help children succeed or at least feel that success is possible, so that they can begin to bring a different attitude to their other academic work. That we succeed is evidenced by the reports of principals and teachers who can tell a difference in the attitude of children after they have been helped in a Study Center.

Since the Study Center is only one of the many activities of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club, tutors should learn about the other resources of the club. Other activities and professional help are available for the children. A number of the Study Center children have benefited from these other facilities. A couple of examples will illustrate. One girl who came for tutoring was so fearful of failure that she put a question mark after every word that she read, and looked continually to the tutor for reassurance. It was obvious that her after-school care was unsatisfactory. She was taken care of by an older child who berated her continually and physically pushed her around. An aunt who has custody of the child had come in to ask for academic help for the girl, and later mentioned her awareness of this problem. Our own observations made it possible for us to then suggest an after-school play group at the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club. With membership in a play-group two afternoons a week, and tutoring two other afternoons, the child learned to walk alone to the club, which she had been unable to do before. The change in this child after she had adequate care four afternoons a week was very impressive. She began to talk spontaneously for the first time, often about "my club," as she called the Neighborhood Club. She became less fearful and her reading improved markedly. The tutor felt that it would have been impossible to help this child without extra support, and the availability of after-school care made this possible.

Another example is that of a group of boys who had attended a summer reading club. They did not need tutoring, but came to the Study Center to be together. None of their homes were available to them after school, so they started a "club" at the Study Center, which limited them to one table in a corner of a busy room. They were encouraged to go to the Neighborhood Club, where they could have a counselor and a regular meeting room. This worked out very well. The only alternative would have been to disband the club, leaving the boys with literally "no place to go."

Perhaps the greatest contribution of the Neighborhood Club to the children of the Study Center is in the areas of enrichment and speech. A variety of experiences and trips are available to children through participation in after-school play groups. We also have a number of children who recently immigrated to America. They are from so many diverse backgrounds and countries that the schools do not have special groups for them. Often, the best way to help their speech, which may concern them most, is to encourage them to participate in a supervised group activity with children their own age.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS

Many of the tutors have had no courses in education, or formal teaching experience. Others are experienced teachers. We are more concerned with the attitude of tutors than with their formal education or experience. Nevertheless, we ask for information about their background and experience with children so that we can best select students for them. Many tutors have a preference for certain age-groups. Some feel more comfortable helping with arithmetic than with reading. Being a general homework helper or helping in the library for a while gives new tutors a helpful orientation to the tutoring program. There is a shelf of staff reading materials and records of the children who have been tutored so that the beginner can see what tutors do. Volunteers are expected to give a time commitment of at least one semester.

New tutors without background in this kind of setting are assigned to an experienced teacher who helps them with beginning materials. A folder is made in the files for the child's record and the tutor is given suggestions of materials to bring to the first lesson.

The "standard supplies" that tutors usually bring to the first lesson include a large manila folder for the child to carry home. Many children are concerned about their ability to take care of materials or keep them from younger siblings. More important is our respect for the child's privacy—his materials (easy books or whatever he may have) are kept intact for him. Into this folder, first of all, should go your name and the appointment times.

Many tutors have a special folder for themselves for the materials they bring to the lessons. Besides a couple of books that tutors think the child might enjoy reading, you may want something to read to the child, a phonics or other workbook, small white cards, and possibly a magic slate, or a set of colored pencils or crayons for use in the lesson. If the tutor can consistently offer a treat of food to the child, this is fine, but whatever you plan to give should be your decision and show consistency. The children often ask about the materials you use, and you can assure them that you will bring the same things for them to use next week. Sometimes an activity carried on over several weeks and then completed, such as a workbook, is treasured by the child. Ordinarily, tutors keep their own supplies intact and give to the child only what is really his to keep, knowing that it may not come back for the next lesson. If it becomes a pattern to continually give "things," the child can expect this to continue. It is better for you to decide ahead of time how and when you will reward the child. Birthdays are important and holidays are good times to remember him with something special. It need not be expensive. A paper-back book that is selected because you feel the child will especially enjoy it is a fine gift. At the end of the school-term, several of our tu-

tors gave the children subscriptions to the summer edition of Weekly Reader, a gift that cost fifty cents and brought ten newspapers of news and activities to the children during the summer.

Many tutors find that their student responds to children's magazines and to crossword puzzles from newspapers or magazines. (Some of the children had never done a crossword puzzle and were fascinated by the result of writing words horizontally and vertically and having words appear as if by magic.) There is also a variety of activity books available in dime stores and bookstores. Usually the children enjoy most what they can do well, but sometimes they too want a challenge. One tutor used a Jack and Jill magazine very successfully with a teen-age girl—it was just right. Other teen-agers would resent the offer. For them, daily newspapers or a teen-age or women's magazine might be more appropriate.

The children should always be offered library books, although sometimes they will not want to take anything home. The tutors have found that by not pushing the children, they soon do become interested in books they have shared with a tutor and begin to read at home.

The tutor's main responsibility to the Study Center and to the children whom they see will be to be prompt and regular about attendance. It is better for you to wait for the child than for him to wait for you. These children give up their free time to come to us. Many of them would prefer almost any other activity, especially at first. We should appreciate their effort by being prompt. In case of an emergency, call the Hyde Park Neighborhood Club. We have also agreed that we will not smoke on the premises, and that we will keep our cigarettes and money out of sight.

Sometimes, tutors have to go on vacations, or miss a lesson. We did try to use substitutes at first, but have found that it is very time-consuming to train a substitute to take over. We would prefer that you call or write to the child, explaining to him the reason, and telling him when you will be seeing him again. If there is time to send a picture postcard, this will show your continued interest.

There is always help available for homework and someone to help the children find new library books. These helps you can offer freely, and some of the children need to be reminded of these services and encouraged to use them.

We ask that the tutor let us know whether or not the child is attending regularly, by keeping this information in his file. (The parents sometimes have to be informed about a child's absence since they may assume that he is with us when he is not. If a child misses a lesson, tutors are encouraged to send postcards or telephone. After continued absences, we may have to make a decision to accept another child from the waiting list. This should be discussed with a supervisor.)

Asking children to come for reading lessons at a certain hour of a certain day is difficult for some of them. Appointment cards help. Some tutors are able to relate to some children so that the children have no trouble in remembering appointment times, and coming promptly. Other children tend to come late for

several lessons, and only slowly are able to accept the fact that this special time is reserved for them.

If tutors comment on or question the lateness of the children, they may be faced with another problem that harasses teachers. Some children lie or give distorted reasons about their being late. We have to understand that whatever their reasons for lying to us, the children are trying somehow to defend their own integrity. An extreme example was the child who reported, "My father had a heart attack just as I was leaving; I got beaten up on my way here," etc. Then the tutor is faced with knowing that the story is not valid, and yet not wanting to destroy the child's self-assurance by having to tell him so. In such a case, the conflict can be at least avoided by saying something such as "Whatever the reason, I am sorry that you were late so that we missed part of our lesson. I hope to see you at 3:30 next Wednesday."

After working with a child for some time, a tutor may become aware of a special activity that she would like to offer to the child. We ask that you get permission from the parents first, plan your time, finances, and transportation clearly before you discuss this possibility with the child. Talking about something that you "might" do someday is hostile teasing, and has no place in work with children. These children have been disappointed so much that we do not want to add to their unhappiness. A cookie freely given or an ice-cream treat promised and delivered within a short time, is far better than a vague promise.

By offering materials to a child and observing him in his work with you, you will gradually get to know some of his difficulties. Later, he may begin to tell you more as he learns to trust you. Our own curiosity or interest should never lead us to ask him about his life or problems. The only confidence worthwhile is based on trust. A child who immediately relates to every adult indiscriminately is not well-adjusted. The children whom the schools refer to us have a strong degree of reserve which responds well to respect.

You should allow yourself time, either at the Study Center, or later at home, to write notes about what went on. These notes are kept in the child's folder, in a locked cabinet, for the benefit of yourself and your supervisor to help plan work for the child. It is impossible to remember everything you did from one lesson to the next, and you can get clues from your notes about what to do next. These notes are not supposed to be professional or complicated. What the child said and did with you, and what you did, anything about his appearance or response that impressed you, is what we want to know.

The schools in our district have been most cooperative with us. We are given information by them that is confidential. Some tutors have been able to visit the schools, and talk to the teachers, who are most helpful.

It can be very meaningful to the children to have us visit "their" school. For some of them, it is the first time that anyone close to them visited their classroom. (I would always tell the child if I intended to visit his school to see his re-

action. And even after you are there, it would be best to wait for the child to acknowledge you, except for a smile.)

In the case of the records at the Study Center, we have to be more than a little cautious. Learning is an emotional experience, and the children we see may reveal a great deal through their talking, writing, and drawing. This material is confidential. We need to use the records as a teaching tool for our new tutors. We ask that tutors never identify a child by name outside the Study Center, and that they refrain from criticism of the families and schools when they are working with the children. The schools and parents have been cooperative, the children have great faith in us, and we do not want in any way to jeopardize that trust.